ENVS898
Management of Degraded Environments
S2 Evening 2016
Dept of Environmental Sciences

Contents

General Information ............................................. 2
Learning Outcomes ........................................... 2
General Assessment Information ......................... 3
Assessment Tasks ............................................. 6
Delivery and Resources .................................... 7
Policies and Procedures ................................... 10
Graduate Capabilities ...................................... 11
Field Trip Work, Health and Safety .................... 14
Recommended readings .................................... 15

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## General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit convenor and teaching staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Kerrie Tomkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:kerrie.tomkins@mq.edu.au">kerrie.tomkins@mq.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Credit points</th>
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<td>4</td>
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### Prerequisites

ENVS803 or GSE803

### Corequisites

### Co-badge status

### Unit description

This interdisciplinary unit aims to develop understanding of some aspects of the impact of human activities on the environment and remedial actions which can be taken. Topics may include one or more of: urban and industrial environmental remediation; rural landscape degradation processes and pathways; remediation techniques in rural landscapes; river rehabilitation; environmental flows; catchment management strategies; and mine site rehabilitation. This unit is a combination of evening classes, weekend field days, and web, library and field-based individual research. Note: permission to complete the unit without completion of ENVS803 as a prerequisite will only be granted if the student has completed a science-based degree.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at [https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates](https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates)

## Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the fundamental issues and processes involved in environmental degradation.
2. Outline current approaches to managing degraded environments.
3. By individual research and field observations, identify the processes involved in the degradation of sites, evaluate their management, and offer solutions for remediation and future management.
4. Demonstrate an effective grasp of the literature on managing degraded environments and an understanding of the issues and approaches in Australia and other parts of the
Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

**General Assessment Information**

**Assessment criteria**

The general assessment criteria that will be used in marking all assessments in ENVS898 are outlined below, where the level of achievement is expected to be at the standard of a postgraduate student.

GradeMark Rubrics will be used to mark and grade all Assessments. The marking will be standards-based using the Macquarie University scale: High Distinction (HD; 85-100 %), Distinction (D; 75-84 %), Credit (Cr; 65-74 %), Pass (P; 50-64 %) and Fail (Fail; 0-49 %). Grades may be further refined by use of a “+” or “-” to indicate work towards the top or the bottom of each grade’s band of marks. Feedback will also come in the form of written comments and/or verbal commentaries. Further details on the marking for each assessment will be provided at the start of semester.

If you experience difficulty in learning or in achieving a good standard in your written expression, please let the convenor know ASAP. The University offers a variety of remedial writing courses and sources of advice that may help you. See: http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/ for further details. We emphasise the necessity for clear communication and its importance in your performance assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Expectation of achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Addressing the task that is specified, or answering the question that is asked, for each assessment, including staying within the word limit unless otherwise specified</td>
<td>Students are able to complete the assessments as instructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstration of knowledge and research skills through written material and verbal presentations</td>
<td>Students have engaged in the subject matter and task. Students show an understanding of the topic through critical analysis and well-developed discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Demonstration of independent thinking through written material and verbal presentations</td>
<td>Students are able to demonstrate in-depth critical thinking by placing the topic in the broader context. Students are able to demonstrate initiative and independent contributions through new ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Appropriate use and citation of a wide range of relevant literature, including scientific research papers and reports. Citation of references within the text and reference list is correct and consistent, with no abbreviations.</td>
<td>Students will undertake thorough literature searches and demonstrate appropriate selection of relevant articles in support of their arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Demonstration of good planning with a clear structure, headings, and a logical argument based firmly on the literature cited.</td>
<td>Students are able to structure written, and verbal work to convey ideas clearly and logically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Penalties for late assessments and extension requests

All assessments must be completed and submitted, on time and in full, in order to receive a minimum pass grade. Penalties for late assessments will be a minimum of 10% per day (including weekend days) or part thereof. These deadlines and penalties will be imposed. Allowing some students to hand assessments in late is unfair to those who meet the deadlines.

The due dates for assessments are not negotiable except in the circumstances outlined below. Please take note of the date on which work is due and let the convenor know of problems in advance or as soon as possible, not after the event: they are likely to be much more sympathetic and flexible if you follow this advice.

The University has a Disruption to Studies Policy, which can be accessed here: [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

In accordance with the Policy, students that experience a disruption to studies which is serious, unavoidable and greater than 3 days as per the Policy guidelines, and wish to request an assessment extension on these grounds, must submit an application for special consideration through ask.mq.edu.au.

If a student experiences a disruption to studies that is unavoidable, but not serious and is of 3 days or less in duration, they can apply for special consideration to the convenor under the following conditions:

- Personal illness or illness of a child – If an assessment is submitted after the due date, a medical certificate or a letter with appropriate supporting documents outlining the extenuating circumstances must be provided that covers the day that the assessment was due, and/or the days preceding.
- Work commitments - Work commitments will not be viewed as grounds for an extension unless your work commitment requires you to be away from home for at least 1 overnight or requires you to be at work for longer than 12 hours per day, e.g. field work or interstate meetings.
- Other family commitments or emergencies - If you have other commitments that take you away from study you should plan for these in advance as part of an effective individual study plan. Extensions will only be considered if your ability to submit an assessment on
time was caused by an unexpected event where you can demonstrate: that the event was not foreseeable or predictable and that the event substantially impacted upon your ability to complete the Assessment Task and that there was alternative option available.

The number of days of disruption and the timing of disruption will be taken into considered in determining whether special consideration should be granted or not. The ultimate grounds for the decision will be whether the disruption was unavoidable and fairness with respect to other students.

**Academic Honesty**

In completing and submitting each Assessment, students must be aware of, and adhere to, the University policy on Academic Honesty, which can be accessed here: [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

The University implements the Academic Honesty Policy for all pieces of academic work by using a number of systems and checks, including:

- Copy detection software such as Turnitin
- Random sampling of assessment items to check for similarities
- Comparing student performance across a number of tasks
- Requiring students to defend submitted work e.g. oral exams or presentations

The penalties, where a person has been proven to have breached the policy (or any of its related procedures), are outlined here: [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html)

Each student is responsible for their own work and for reporting suspected breaches to the convenor or Head of Department together with all relevant materials or evidence of the basis of the allegation.

**Assessment submission and return of grades**

All Assessments should be submitted through Turnitin (See iLearn for the relevant Assessment link). There is no requirement to submit a hard copy as well. Further details on how to use Turnitin will be provided at the start of semester.

The Assessments will be marked via GradeMark, an online marking system within Turnitin that enables feedback and grades to be provided electronically. All attempts will be made to mark and return Assessments within two teaching weeks of the submission. However, please keep in mind that with large pieces of written work it can take a significant time to complete this.
### Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1 September 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 2</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20 October 2016</td>
</tr>
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#### Assessment 1

**Due:** 1 September 2016  
**Weighting:** 40%

### Extended Response Questions

The aim of this Assessment is to draw together the lecture material from the first 3 weeks and to extend knowledge on other aspects that are highly relevant to the unit. The Assessment consists of 5 questions which are worth 8 marks (8 %) each. To answer each question requires extensive background reading, research and critical thinking.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the fundamental issues and processes involved in environmental degradation.
- Outline current approaches to managing degraded environments.
- Demonstrate an effective grasp of the literature on managing degraded environments and an understanding of the issues and approaches in Australia and other parts of the world.
- Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

#### Assessment 2

**Due:** 20 October 2016  
**Weighting:** 60%

### Report, Presentation and Participation

This Assessment aims to give students some practical experience in developing an environmental management plan. In this instance, the plan is a rehabilitation plan for the Fish River, near Bathurst NSW, following years of sand and gravel extraction from the river. The Assessment is largely group-work, but includes individual assessment. Students will be assigned to small groups of ~ 4 students in Week 6. A break-down of the Assessment is as follows:

1. Report: Each group will develop a rehabilitation plan that will be presented, along with supporting information, as a comprehensive report which is due in Week 10. The report
will be assessed and the same marks will be awarded to each student in the group (worth 30 % of the total 60 %).

2. Participation: The contribution of each student to the group report will be assessed by peer review. Each member of the group will complete a self-evaluation and peer evaluation, providing a mark out of 20 for each group member with a written justification. The final mark will be the average of the individual marks (worth 20 % of the total 60 %).

3. Presentation: Each group will give a presentation of their rehabilitation plan to the class. The time allocated with be 5 mins per group member, plus 10 mins question and answer time per group. The presentation will be assessed individually based on the communication style and effectiveness of each student (worth 10 % of the total 60 %).

Further information on the Assessment will be provided at the start of semester.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Describe the fundamental issues and processes involved in environmental degradation.
• Outline current approaches to managing degraded environments.
• By individual research and field observations, identify the processes involved in the degradation of sites, evaluate their management, and offer solutions for remediation and future management.
• Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

Delivery and Resources

Unit iLearn Page

This unit has a home page that can be accessed through the Macquarie University online facility (ilearn.mq.edu.au). The iLearn page will be used to circulate information and other materials related to the course, field trip and assessments. The page also includes a discussion board where students can pose questions to the convenor and generate discussion with other students.

Evening classes

The weekly program consists of 3-hour classes on Thursday nights from 6 - 9 pm in EMC-G240 (Science Faculty Tutorial Room). The classes include a combination of lectures, practical exercises, class discussion and student presentations as outlined in the unit schedule and text below. A short break during the 3-hours will be allowed where possible.
**Note:** Please bring writing materials and laptop computers to each class.

- **Lectures and practical exercises:** Weeks 1-7 will include background presentations and practical exercises that are essential to convey the course content and prepare for the field trip and assessments. Attendance is compulsory.
- **Feedback sessions:** In Weeks 8-9 students are required to discuss their progress on Assessment 2 with the convenor.
- **Student presentations:** These will be held in Week 10 as part of Assessment 2. Each student is required to present, as well as participate in the question-answer sessions following each group presentation. Attendance is compulsory.

There are no classes in Weeks 11-13. Instead students are required to contribute to an online discussion blog on how Australia compares to the rest of the world in its management of degraded environments.

**Field Trip: 16-18 September 2016**

There will a weekend field trip to the Bathurst area in the central-west of NSW, commencing on Friday 16 September at 2 pm. During the field trip, students will visit:

- Former Browns Creek Mine site to view environmental management and rehabilitation aspects of the old mine, driving back via Cadia Mine.
- Fish River sand and gravel extraction site to view river degradation issues and collect field data for Assessment 2.

We will stay in stay in Bathurst on the Friday and Saturday night. Accommodation will be organised by the convenor. Transport is to be organised by each student, with car-pooling recommended. See below for further details on costs. Details on logistics will be provided at the start of semester and in the weeks prior to the trip. Attendance on the field trip is compulsory.

**Field trip essentials on what to bring**

Each student will need to ensure that they are equipped with the following essentials during each field trip:

- Adequate food for each day (i.e. packed lunch)
- Adequate water for each day (minimum 1 ltr)
- Rain jacket
- Clothing appropriate for the weather and season (e.g. warm jumper, long-sleeved shirt for sun protection)
- Hat and sunscreen
• Closed shoes, preferably boots
• Field book, writing materials and camera

Field trip costs

The cost of the field trip is not included in the course fees, however all attempts are made to keep these to a minimum. Additional costs that will need to be paid by each student include overnight accommodation (2 nights), meals and transport.

Indicative costs for accommodation in Bathurst are $50 - $150 p.p.n. depending on the style of accommodation. Options range from pub-style with shared bathrooms, to motel-style with private facilities. While it is anticipated that most will stay with the group, students are welcome to organise their own accommodation if they prefer.

Requirements to pass this unit

Attendance and assessment submission

You are required to attend all lectures, practicals, student presentations, class discussions and the field trip, and submit all pieces of assessment to receive a Passing grade for this unit. Non-attendance may attract a penalty of up to 10% of the final grade per day unless a valid reason with supporting documentation is provided.

Workload requirements

The workload for units at Macquarie University is based on a minimum of 3 hours per credit point per week to receive a Pass grade (including 13 x weeks of semester and 2 x weeks of mid-semester break). For ENVS898 this means that you are expected to spend at least 12 hours per week, or a total of around 150 hours on course learning activities to receive a Pass grade.

A guide of the hours required to receive a Passing grade is outlined below. However, keep in mind that grades are awarded based on a demonstration of understanding and ability, not on effort! Approximately one third of the course is face-to-face in the class, field or online, while the remaining two-thirds is to be spent on individual study, primarily to complete the assessments and undertake further reading related to the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours per semester</th>
<th>Percentage allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures, practical exercises, feedback sessions, student presentations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trip</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online discussion blog</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual study: completion of assessments and additional reading</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/61923/unit_guide/print
Unit Rubric
In ENVS898, it is expected that your assessments will be very high quality and demonstrate comprehension of course content including knowledge, skills and abilities which are at the standard of a postgraduate level. Grades for the unit as a whole will be awarded according to the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Functional</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General description of the level of attainment</td>
<td>Has not yet reached the desired standard. Limited understanding of required concepts and knowledge. A fail grade (or under some circumstances, a conceded pass) would be given.</td>
<td>Has reached basic academic standards. Work has limited translation of concepts and procedures to new contexts unless aided. A pass grade would be awarded.</td>
<td>Has gone beyond the expected standards. Exhibits high levels of independence and can use concepts to generate new ways of completing procedures. Can engage in productive critical reflection. A grade of distinction or high distinction would be awarded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has completely reached the standards expected. Can work independently in new contexts, adapting procedures to meet the context. Demonstrates awareness of own limitations. A credit grade would be awarded.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Policies and Procedures
Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

  *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/learning_and_teaching/policy.html) of
Policy Central.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

**Results**

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in **eStudent**. For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- **Workshops**
- **StudyWise**
- **Academic Integrity Module for Students**
- **Ask a Learning Adviser**

**Student Enquiry Service**

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

**Equity Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the **Disability Service** who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

**IT Help**

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the **Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy**. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

**Graduate Capabilities**

**PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills**

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Describe the fundamental issues and processes involved in environmental degradation.
- Outline current approaches to managing degraded environments.
- Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

**Assessment tasks**

- Assessment 1
- Assessment 2

**PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- By individual research and field observations, identify the processes involved in the degradation of sites, evaluate their management, and offer solutions for remediation and future management.
- Demonstrate an effective grasp of the literature on managing degraded environments and an understanding of the issues and approaches in Australia and other parts of the world.
- Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

**Assessment tasks**

- Assessment 1
- Assessment 2

**PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create
new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**

- By individual research and field observations, identify the processes involved in the degradation of sites, evaluate their management, and offer solutions for remediation and future management.

**Assessment task**

- Assessment 2

**PG - Effective Communication**

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**

- Develop skills and experience in analysing environmental data, critiquing an existing environmental management plan, preparing a new environmental management plan for a degraded site, presenting the results of research, and succinct report writing.

**Assessment tasks**

- Assessment 1
- Assessment 2

**PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens**

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**

- Demonstrate an effective grasp of the literature on managing degraded environments and an understanding of the issues and approaches in Australia and other parts of the
Assessment task

• Assessment 1

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

• By individual research and field observations, identify the processes involved in the degradation of sites, evaluate their management, and offer solutions for remediation and future management.

Assessment task

• Assessment 2

Field Trip Work, Health and Safety

The safety of you and those around you is our highest priority. Consequently, ALL participants in fieldwork activities are obliged to work and behave appropriately in the field, and to take care to protect their own health, safety and welfare and that of fellow fieldwork participants. You are required to follow instructions from the Fieldwork Leader at all times.

Prior to the fieldwork, you must let the Fieldwork Leader know of any allergies, special dietary requirements or medical considerations that may affect your ability to participate in fieldwork. For known medical conditions, you will also need to provide a treatment plan. Details of your responsible next of kin must be provided in case of emergencies.

You are required to wear and carry clothing and footwear as appropriate to the fieldwork situation. Your Fieldwork Leader will advise you as to what these are prior to the field trip. Irrespective of the activity, footwear must be worn. For terrestrial fieldwork, ankle to knee protection must be worn either in the form of either long trousers or gaiters. For marine fieldwork, appropriate clothing to protect against sunburn and exposure should be worn. For all fieldwork activities, a hat, sunscreen, insect repellent and items to protect against unexpected weather changes, such as rain & cold, are strongly recommended. The Fieldwork Leader reserves the right to exclude anyone that is ill-equipped from the activity.
If you are taking any medication, please ensure that you take sufficient supplies with you on the field trip. The University’s staff are unable, by law, to provide this to you. This includes pain relief, such as paracetamol or nurofen, cold and flu medication and anti-histamines for allergies.

If you need to leave the field location for any reason prior to completion of the scheduled activities, you must first inform the Fieldwork Leader. In the event of illness or injury, please let the Fieldwork Leader know immediately. All injury’s or incidents must be reported via the on-line reporting system: http://www.ohs.mq.edu.au/form5a.php

Alcohol is a significant contributing factor in many incidents and acts of prejudicial conduct. Alcohol must not be consumed when undertaking fieldwork activities or when using a motor vehicle/machinery. After-hours consumption of alcohol is at the discretion of the Fieldwork Leader. Anyone acting irresponsibly or in any way deemed to be a danger to themselves or others by the Fieldwork Leader will be required to leave the field trip, return to Sydney at their own expense and report to the Head of Department. The consequences of this may include exclusion from the Unit of study or your Degree program.

For more information, contact:

Russell Field
Fieldwork Manager (Dept of Environmental Sciences)
Macquarie University NSW 2109.
(W) 98508341

**Recommended readings**

The following textbooks and other material related to the field trip are recommended for background reading. Note: it is essential that each student does their own literature searches and finds materials, particularly scientific papers that are relevant to the unit. This requirement is to: aid learning and understanding of the subject matter, develop good research skills, and successfully complete the unit assessments. The library has a number of search engines that will enable you to directly access publications using ArticleLinker e.g. Web of Knowledge. Google Scholar can also be useful to find reports and other grey literature.

**Environmental Management Standards**


**Mining environments**

Energy Industries. UNSW Press. 793 pp. (library)


Former Browns Creek Mine


Cadia Mine


Riverine environments


Fish River

Unit guide ENVS898 Management of Degraded Environments

Ltz. 3 volumes. (library)

International issues